

Ames M. Barnett,
Mayor
Council:
Robert Armour
Travis Armour
Nathaniel Cullars, Sr.
Maceo Mahoney
Mike Scarborough
Marion Tutt

WASHINGTON SPARK!

A monthly newsletter
from the city
government of
Washington, Georgia.

Empowering our
citizens through
public information.
September 2018

BENEFITS OF THE WASHINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT



Photo Courtesy of Greg Scott

With Construction on-going of the new Washington Fire Station, a lot of people are talking about how the station benefits the citizens of Washington. Everyone knows about the life and property saving attributes gained from having the Washington Fire Department, but what other benefits does this station bring to Washington?

When you call 911 to report a fire, you can have confidence in the fact that the Washington Fire Department will respond quickly, 24 hours a day & 7 days a week. Many people don't realize however that the Fire Department also provides Rescue services. When Rescue is called out, whether it be for a wreck, heart attack, stroke victim or even helping the EMS with lift assists for patients, the Washington Fire Department always responds. The WFD responds to approximately 60 calls per month. Over the past 42 months, the WFD has responded to 2,469 calls County wide. They consisted of the following:

- 85 structure fires
- 45 vehicle fires
- 114 grass/woods fires
- 1,579 medical assists / EMS
- 231 motor vehicle accidents
- 178 fire alarms
- 237 other incidents



Photo Courtesy of Tom Duggan

All Washington Firemen are Certified 1st Responders, with over 85% of our staff having the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certification.



A Verisk Analytics Business

ISO RATINGS

Another benefit of having the Washington Fire Department is that it saves citizens on their homeowners and renters insurance premiums. ISO stands for Insurance Service Office. This is an organization that provides statistical information on risk associated with loss of life and property due to a fire. They assign a City, County or Fire Station a score based on this associated risk. The score goes from 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest risk and 10 being the highest risk.

There are many factors that go into your homeowners and renters insurance premium. They include; the individuals financial credit rating, number of claims you have filed, the size of your home, the materials used to build your home, its location to the nearest fire station, and the fire department's ISO rating. You want to live in a community in which they are graded as low risk, in this case being the City of Washington which has a current grade of 2. Not only do City residents benefit from this low ISO rating, but County residents within a 5-mile radius of Washington also fall under this rating of 2.

The average homeowner in Washington with a 1,000-1,500 sq. foot house saves at a minimum of \$700 annually and a homeowner with a home greater than 1,500 sq. feet saves approximately \$1,000 annually. Businesses save around \$700 annually as well. We have approximately 1,725 homes in Washington and 150 businesses. That equates to \$1,207,500 in savings for residents and \$105,000 in savings for local businesses. This is a very modest number because it does not take into account the larger homes and many antebellum homes in Washington. This is a combined savings of \$1,312,500 annually. If you subtract out the annual cost for the Fire Department of \$948,241 which includes the loan payments, residents save \$364,259 annually.

COST OF FIRE STATION

Washington borrowed \$975,000 through GMA's Bricks & Mortar program, which allows a municipality to update infrastructure and pay it back over a 15 year period at a lower interest rate than a traditional loan. The City's 2017 & 2018 budget included the debt service payments, so these funds have already been accounted for. There will be no need to increase property taxes or utility rates to cover the cost. Due to the City of Washington improving efficiency and cutting costs through all departmental operations, the City is able to fund this much needed upgrade to the fire station.

WHY WE NEED A FIRE STATION

The Fire Station that was demolished was built in 1955 and was originally built as a furniture store. The Washington Fire Department purchased the property and moved operations there in the late 70's. The living quarters were housed in the original furniture store with modifications to the existing building. It served the purpose for 63 years. It became apparent that there were issues with mold and asbestos back in 2017 and the discussions began about how to remedy the situation. The costs associated with lead and asbestos abatement are extremely high in the 10's of thousands of dollars, and then you would still be left with the same building in need of renovations. It was decided to build a new facility vs. rehabbing the current building.

Another issue of concern is that the old facility did not have the capabilities of housing a female fire fighter. All fire fighters slept in one open room together and shared one bathroom. This would not be acceptable if the City were to hire a female fire fighter.

The size of the fire station is a two story in order to utilize the small amount of space available on the existing site. The lot where the building sits is very small and room is needed for ingress and egress of the fire equipment. The living quarters are down stairs and the sleeping quarters are upstairs. It will be used to recruit and retain qualified fire fighters/Rescue workers.

In summary, The City of Washington made an investment into the safety and health of the residents of Washington by building this new station. We hope that you never need our services, but if you do you can rest assured that we will be there. For more information or questions, contact the City Administrator at 706-678-3277 or sbailey@washingtonwilkes.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS:



- *Cruise-In on the Square Sept. 8th 4:30-8:30 p.m.
- *City Council Meets Sept. 10th 3:30 p.m.



HISTORIC WASHINGTON GA

Callaway & Washington Museum Fall Programs

9.15 Indigo Dye Workshop - Callaway \$40

9.29 Family Day - Museum \$10

10.6 Kids Ghost Hunt 101 - Callaway \$25

10.6 Ghost Hunt 101 - Callaway \$20

10.13 Mule Day - Callaway \$10/car

10.20 Knifemaking Workshop - Callaway \$120

Check out our new website!

www.historicwashingtonga.com

Sign up for our e-newsletter

Washington Weekend Planner
to stay in the loop!

COMMUNITY HOUSING PROJECTS

The Georgia Department of Community of Affairs (DCA) awarded grant funding to 15 local cities around the state, the City of Washington was one of the cities. The Community HOME Investment Program (CHIP) grant funding's overall goal is to expand the supply of and access to affordable new housing and help with owner occupied home repairs.

The City of Washington in partnership with Hands On Washington, Inc. will be using the 2018 CHIP funding to build 4 new single-family houses (On Norman Street) for sale to eligible low and moderate income homebuyers and assist 5 eligible low and moderate income households with repairs on their houses.

For more information on the single-family homes for sale contact: Marcus Dill, City of Washington at (706) 678-3277 and for more information on the owner-occupied repair program contact: Barbara Bacon, Hands On Washington, Inc. at (706) 678-4480. Applications for the owner-occupied repair program can be picked up at the Hands On Washington, Inc. office located at 106 South Jefferson Street every Wednesday during the month of September between the hours of 9:30a.m-1:30p.m.

PLEASE ADOPT A NEEDY PET



Meet Zoey! She is about 7 years old and is an adorable little cuddle bug!

Please consider adopting her today by calling 706-678-2287.